




## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Kimberly A. McNeeley, CPRP, Acting Director   
Austin Parks and Recreation Department

**DATE:** June 29, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Motorized Vehicles on Parkland

---

The purpose of this memo is to inform you the Parks and Recreation Department (PAR) is experiencing an increase in the use of motorized scooters and bicycles (e-bikes) on the Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail, as well as other parkland trails.

Use of motorized scooters and bicycles is prohibited by City Code Parks Administration Section, Chapter 8-1-31 (Use of Motor vehicles in Parks). The section of the code states:

- "A person may not drive a motor vehicle or motor driven device in a public recreation area." and
- "A person may drive a motor vehicle on a public roadway and in a parking area of a public recreation area."

A "public recreation area" is defined as, "*a park, recreational facility, athletic field, building, swimming pool, playground, nature preserve, trail, dock, or greenbelt managed, maintained, or operated by the Parks and Recreation Department or on the Department's behalf.*" {City Code 8-1-1(11)}.

Exceptions to this regulation include accommodations for individuals with disabilities such as individual Segways (not groups or tours) and motorized wheelchairs for ADA accessibility and areas specifically designated for off-road bike use (presently, this only includes the Emma Long Metro Park Motorcycle Trails).

This regulation is also included in the Department's Park Rules. The Park Rules can viewed on PAR's website at: [www.austintexas.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation](http://www.austintexas.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation)

Prohibiting these devices has been a park rule/regulation for many years; however, with the recent increase in usage of these devices PAR recognizes the need to better communicate this to the public. As such, the Department plans to move forward with a two week public awareness campaign beginning July 1<sup>st</sup> and ending July 15<sup>th</sup>. This campaign is intended to appropriately inform the public of regulations associated with motorized vehicles.

Motorized vehicles like the examples below are prohibited because of their high speed capabilities. Mixing pedestrians and bicyclists with battery-operated vehicles that have the capacity of traveling 15 mph to over 25 mph in recreational areas can cause major safety concerns. Use of Segways is permitted only to accommodate individuals with disabilities in recreational areas but groups using them are NOT permitted.

 <p>E-Bikes</p>	 <p>E-Scooters</p>	 <p>Segways</p>
--	---	--

The Park Rangers unit within the Parks Department, whose sole mission is to serve as ambassadors for Austin's park system that promote responsible recreation, will assist with "on-trail" education. The Rangers will inform the public of the park rules. When people persistently violate park rules, the Austin Police Department (APD) will be notified. Additionally, temporary signage will be placed throughout the Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail notifying trail users of the regulation. The temporary signage will be replaced by permanent signage installation in the near future. PARD is in the process of fabricating the permanent signage and expects installation to be complete by the end of July. PARD has communicated and coordinated this plan with our partner organization, the Trail Foundation.

For additional information regarding permitted motorized vehicles on parkland, please contact Division Manager Amanda Ross at (512) 978-2601 or email her at [Amanda.Ross@austintexas.gov](mailto:Amanda.Ross@austintexas.gov).

cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager  
Sara Hensley, Interim Assistant City Manager  
Rey Arellano, Assistant City Manager  
Robert Goode, Assistant City Manager  
Joe Pantalio, Interim Assistant City Manager  
Mark Washington, Assistant City Manager